



QUESTIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NOMINEE

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OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (CGS §§ [10A-1D](#))

The executive director implements the Office of Higher Education's (OHE) policies and directives, which include, among other things, the licensure and accreditation of independent higher education programs and institutions and oversight of private occupational schools, scholarship and financial aid programs, and the alternative route to teaching certification (ARC) program.

QUESTIONS

1. OHE oversees Connecticut's private occupational schools. In recent years, the abrupt closure of several schools required the office to take administrative action to protect the interests of enrolled students. Do you believe OHE is well-equipped to protect students' monetary and academic investments should closures continue to occur?
2. How does OHE evaluate private occupational schools to ensure that they deserve initial or renewal authorizations?
3. PA [13-247](#) created the Governor's Scholarship Program, a consolidated state financial aid program to replace the state's four previous programs (i.e., Connecticut Aid to Public College Students, Connecticut Independent College Student Grant, the Capitol Scholarship, and Connecticut Aid to Charter Oak). What impact have these changes had on students and institutions?
4. The state's independent institutions opposed the creation of the Governor's Scholarship Program. How has OHE assisted them with transitioning to the program over the past two fiscal years? Do you feel that their concerns have been sufficiently addressed?
5. The Governor's Scholarship Program offers a performance incentive award for students who are second-year scholarship recipients to encourage retention and degree completion. What criteria has OHE established for student eligibility and selection?

6. The legislature recently asked OHE to develop a plan to enter into a reciprocity agreement with other states that establishes standards for authorizing the delivery of online instruction (SA [14-11](#)). What are the potential benefits and drawbacks to Connecticut entering into such an agreement?
7. The ARC program prepares mid-career adults for positions in teacher shortage areas. What are the current subject shortage areas for which ARC offers training? Are there any particular shortage areas for which it is difficult to attract participants? Do you have any thoughts on how to attract participants for these shortage areas?
8. OHE administers a grant and loan reimbursement program for students enrolled in teacher preparation programs to become bilingual teachers or teachers of English language learners (ELL). PA [14-21](#) redesigned the program to allow current students, rather than certified teachers, to be eligible. Has this change attracted more applicants to the program? Are there any other steps the state can take to help alleviate the shortage of bilingual and ELL teachers?
9. What role can OHE play in Connecticut's efforts to strengthen workforce development?
10. In the past, independent higher education institutions expressed concerns about the timeliness of OHE's review processes for program modifications, nonsubstantive changes, licensure, and accreditation. PA [13-118](#) made several changes to these processes. What impact have the changes had? How have the independent institutions responded to the changes?
11. OHE must establish academic review commissions to hear appeals of its denial of a program's application for licensure or accreditation (CGS § [10a-34](#)). Do you believe this appeals process to be an effective one? Do you have any concerns about this process or suggestions for improving it?

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